

# Improving the Updating Process of **Current Care Guidelines**

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### **Background**

Evidence needs to be up to date in a clinical practice guideline to ensure its usability. Current Care (CC) has had a structured updating process on a three year basis. Updating a guideline, however, remains a challenge for voluntary based working groups (WG's).

#### **Purpose**

The aim was to specify the key-elements of successful update and to recognize the needs for further development of the updating process.

#### Methods

Web-based, structured feedback has been collected from the WG's since 2005. The feedback survey consists of both multiple choice and open-ended questions.

During the five year period the survey has been sent to total of 767 WG members. The response rate varied from 37.7 to 49.7%. Feedback is annually categorized and analyzed to evaluate and enhance the updating process.

### Results

Feedback of the updating process has mainly been positive. The WG members find the work inspiring and educational. The main challenge is updating all the guideline material (Table I). Updating has been experienced time consuming and laborious.

According to the feedback the editorial board increased its role in the updating process to lessen the load of voluntary experts; managing editor makes suggestions how to improve the usability of the guideline. The flexibility of timing has been increased and need for a guideline update is dependent on new evidence. The current process is illustrated in Figure 1.

Changes have been made to the updating process after receiving feedback. The work load of the voluntary WG members should be reduced and a reward system, both financial and academic, should be created. The process, timing and thoroughness, should be more flexible depending on new evidence in the guideline field.

Figure 1. Updating process of Current Care.

## Chief editor and Editorial board:

Decides on updating Nominates CC editor

#### CC editor and Managing WG chair: editor:

Updates the memberships if necessary

CC office: Gathers the feedback and prepares

Posts guideline in WG's extranet

## Information specialist:

materials online Conducts a systematic baseline literature search

## 1st meeting of the WG

Guideline developing methods and distribution of work

Following meetings of the WG and individual work in-between: updates to the guideline text and evidence summaries

the guideline texts

Focused literature searches

## CC office:

Editing the texts

Comment round to stakeholders if adequate

Revision of the text if needed and language checking

Publishing contracts Conflict of interest disclosure

## Publication

- · Internet (html and pdf versions)
- · Summary in the Medical Journal Duodecim

## Updated also:

- Patient versions
- · Online study courses and slides
- Translations

CC = Current Care WG = working group

Table I. Challenges of updating a guideline.

Work load is not equally divided between WG members

Long-lasting and heavy process while working full time

No financial compensation

Amount of literature to go through

Writing new and updating evidence summaries

Difficult to keep up with the schedule and arrange meetings where all members can participate

